

aver

meaning

state confidently

example

I wish to aver that I am certain of success.

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bate

meaning

let down; restrain

example

Until it was time to open the presents, the children had to bate their curiosity.

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benediction

meaning

blessing

example

The appearance of the sun after the many rainy days was like a benediction.

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cavalcade

meaning

procession; parade

example

As described by Chaucer, the cavalcade of Canterbury pilgrims was motley group.

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cede

meaning

transfer; yield title to

example

I intend to cede this property to the city.

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censor

meaning

overseer of morals; person who eliminates inappropriate matter

example

Soldiers dislike having their mail read by a censor but understand the need for this precaution.

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centaur

meaning

mythical figure, half man and half horse

example

I was particularly impressed by the statue of the centaur in the Roman Hall of the museum.

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centrifuge

meaning

machine that separates substances by whirling them

example

At the dairy, we employ a centrifuge to separate cream from milk.

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cosmic

meaning

pertaining to the universe; vast

example

cosmic rays derive their name from the fact that they bombard the earth's atmosphere from outer space.

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delusive

meaning

deceptive; raising vain hopes

example

Do not raise your hopes on the basis of his delusive promises.

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deplore

meaning

regret

example

Although I deplore the vulgarity of your language, I defend your right to express yourself freely.

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dislodge

meaning

remove (forcible)

example

Thrusting her fist up under the choking man's lower ribs, Margaret used the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge the food caught in his throat.

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effusion

meaning

pouring forth

example

The critics objected to her literary effusion because it was too flowery.

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expatiate

meaning

talk at length

example

At this time, please give us a brief resume of your work; we shall permit you to expatiate later.

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extort

meaning

wring from; get money by threats, etc.

example

The blackmailer extorted money from his victim.

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fallible

meaning

liable to err

example

I know I am fallible, but I feel confident that I am right this time.

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flagrant

meaning

conspicuously wicked

example

We cannot condone such flagrant violations of the rules.

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flourish

meaning

grow well; prosper; make sweeping gestures

example

The orange trees flourished in the sun.

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fluster

meaning
confuse

example

The teacher's sudden question flustered him and he stammered his reply.

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foment

meaning
stir up; instigate

example

This report will foment dissension in the club.

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igneous

meaning
produced by fire; volcanic

example

Lava, pumice, and other igneous rocks are found in great abundance around Mount Vesuvius near Naples.

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invidious

meaning
designed to create ill will or envy

example

We disregarded her invidious remarks because we realized how jealous she was.

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lachrymose

meaning
producing tears

example

His voice has a lachrymose quality that is more appropriate at a funeral than a class reunion.

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lampoon

meaning
ridicule

example

This article lampoons the pretensions of some movie moguls.

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nocturnal

meaning
done at night

example

Mr. Jones obtained a watchdog to prevent the nocturnal raids on his chicken coops.

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oaf

meaning
stupid, awkward person

example

He called the unfortunate waiter a clumsy oaf.

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parable

meaning
short, simple story teaching a moral

example

Let us apply to our own conduct the lesson that this parable teaches.

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pejorative

meaning

negative in connotation; having a belittling effect.

example

Instead of criticizing Clinton's policies, the Republicans made pejorative remarks about his character.

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peremptory

meaning

demanding and leaving no choice

example

From Jack's peremptory knock on the door, Jill could tell he would not give up until she let him in.

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petty

meaning

trivial; unimportant; very small

example

She had no major complaints to make about his work, only a few petty quibbles that were almost too minor to state.

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postulate

meaning

self-evident truth

example

We must accept these statements as postulates before pursuing our discussions any further.

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prescience

meaning

ability to foretell the future

example

Given the current wave of Japan-bashing, it does not take prescience for me to foresee problems in our future trade relations with Japan.

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render

meaning

deliver; provide; represent

example

He rendered aid to the needy and indigent.

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reprisal

meaning

retaliation

example

I am confident that we are ready for any reprisals the enemy may undertake.

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rigid

meaning

stiff and unyielding; strict; hard and unbending

example

By living with a man to whom she was not married, George Eliot broke Victorian society's most rigid rule of respectable behavior.

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sanguine

meaning

cheerful; hopeful

example

Let us not be too sanguine about the outcome; something could go wrong.

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sobriety

meaning

moderation (especially regarding indulgence in alcohol); seriousness

example

Neither drunkards nor comics are noted for sobriety.

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sophist

meaning

teacher of philosophy; quibbler; employer of fallacious reasoning

example

You are using all the devices of a sophist in trying to prove your case; your argument is specious.

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stratum

meaning

layer of earth's surface; layer of society

example

Unless we alleviate conditions in the lowest stratum of our society, we may expect grumbling and revolt.

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welt

meaning

mark from beating or whipping

example

The evidence of child abuse was very clear; Jennifer's small body was covered with welts and bruises.

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witticism

meaning

witty saying; facetious remark

example

What you regard as witticisms are often offensive to sensitive people.

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accretion

meaning

growth; increase

example

The accretion of wealth marked the family's rise in power.

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affinity

meaning

kinship

example

She felt an affinity with all who suffered; their pains were her pains.

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alienate

meaning

make hostile; separate

example

Her attempts to alienate the two friends failed because they had complete faith in each other.

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amiss

meaning

wrong; faulty

example

Seeing her frown, he wondered if anything were amiss.

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